DOCTOR HERACLIUS GLOSS

By

GUY DE MAUPASSANT

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Maupassant

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Doctor Heraclius Gloss

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By Guy de Maupassant

Translated by Jeffery E. Jeffery

With an Introduction by
Ernest Boyd

M-99-8

NEW YORK
BRENTANO'S
Publishers

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

VAIL-BALLOU COMPANY
BINGHAMTON AND NEW YORK

INTRODUCTION

Readers of the Collected Works of Guy de Maupassant, in the handsome, definitive edition of Conard, will search those twenty-nine volumes in vain for *Le Docteur Héraclius Gloss.* This curious tale is not included in the two volumes of posthumous works, nor is it among the many hitherto uncollected stories which the Editor of that edition brought together for the first time. In fact, this English translation is its first appearance in book form, for it has not been reissued in France since it was published by the *Revue de Paris,* in November 1921. On that occasion, M. Jean Ossola, the husband of Maupassant's niece, prefaced the story with a short note explaining the circumstances of this belated publication of

a work which cannot fail to be of the greatest interest to all admirers of Maupassant.

When M. Conard was preparing his edition this manuscript was examined. "We were then of the opinion," wrote M. Ossola, "that it should not be included in the new edition, not only because the author himself had seemed indisposed to give it to the public, but also, and particularly, because its form and technique marked it off somewhat from the general body of the author's work." However, in the course of time, a doubt suggested itself as to whether "we could indefinitely withhold from the Great Judge this work, a youthful work undoubtedly, but a finished one, which perhaps reveals in the author a passing tendency to seek his inspiration in the form of Voltaire." "The *Revue de Paris,*" continues M. Ossola, "thought it would be interesting to publish this little work belonging to a

period when Maupassant was entirely absorbed in the enduring labor of his approaching maturity." Therefore, "without any pretensions, which Guy would certainly have energetically disclaimed, we have felt that we could not refuse to satisfy the natural curiosity which we are told exists, and no doubt rightly."

"Doctor Heraclius Gloss" is, in effect, a very early work of Maupassant's, for his correspondence indicates that he was writing it between 1875 and 1877. The first specific allusion to it is in a letter to his mother, dated Paris, October 6th, 1875, in which he writes: "I absolutely do not know how to arrange my chapter about the servant and the monkey in *Héraclius,* and I am greatly worried." At that time he had published nothing but a few poems, and one story, *La Main d'écorché,* which appeared in 1875, over a pseudonym, in a provincial almanac. Between that date and 1880, when he

sprang to fame with *Boule de Suif,* Maupassant had written only four stories, which have been reprinted in an appendix to the first volume of the Conard edition, as specimens of those years of his apprenticeship. Two of these were afterwards elaborated and admitted by the author, under the titles of *La Main* and *Les Idées du Colonel,* into the canon of his works collected during his lifetime. The others he left to the obscurity they deserved until they acquired a posthumous value as curiosities, because of their feebleness and jejune sentimentality.

It is difficult to understand how such work could have been included in an edition which found no place for "Doctor Heraclius Gloss." The latter, although written long before *Boule de Suif,* shows a degree of maturity far surpassing anything of Maupassant's belonging to that early period, prior to 1880, when he was learning his craft under the guidance

and severe critical discipline of Flaubert. Its publication would certainly have been a better service to his memory than that of most of the posthumous writings which were readily issued by his representatives. Except for the two unfinished novels, *L'Angélus* and *L'Ame Etrangère,* none of the manuscripts of Maupassant which have been published since his death is so striking as "Dr. Heraclius Gloss."

This philosophical story reveals the author's youth only in the haste and incoherence to which certain anachronisms must be attributed. The scene is laid at first in the seventeenth century, yet, later on, there are references to the postal service, to gendarmes and to the prefecture. It shows that, at a time when Maupassant had already mastered his style and his ideas, he was still groping his way towards his own technique and his own manner. The latter, indeed, are more clearly perceptible in those first

four stories, *La Main d'écorché, Le Donneur d'eau bénite, Coco* and *Le Mariage du Lieutenant Laré,* to which I have referred, in spite of their lack of originality and real power. They are, as it were, the puny embryo of an art of which Maupassant was to become one of the world's recognized masters. There, in the germ, one can see the first stirrings of the peculiar talent which expressed itself in *Boule de Suif, Le Horla* and *La Parure.*

What we find in "Doctor Heraclius Gloss" is the promise of a very different development. The theme reminds one of Voltaire, and the central figure is sketched in with strokes that have something of the skill of an Anatole France in his portraits of learned eccentrics. Heraclius Gloss is one of the tribe, a gourmet and a bibliophile, a combination which renders him attractive even when he is ridiculous. Intellectually he is a philosopher, a trifle mad, no doubt,

but his life is shared between his love for the fair sex, the fascinating pursuit of rare tomes, and the quest for truth. We ask no more of such characters in literature—or life—and welcome Dr. Heraclius Gloss as one of the same fraternity as M. Bergeret and Jérôme Coignard. As befits the earlier age to which he belongs, the good Doctor finds Truth in the shape of a dusty manuscript, inscribed in six languages and bearing a message which converts him to a belief in metempsychosis.

The search for the author of this strange parchment provides Maupassant with an excellent opportunity for the exercise of his bizarre imagination and his disillusioned philosophy. Like Peer Gynt, Heraclius Gloss finds, first a disciple and then an opponent, in a lunatic asylum, but unlike Ibsen's hero, his escape to sanity is of brief duration. When he is locked up again, he reënters an in-

sane world which is divided into partisans of his own illusions and those of his adversary. His dog, however, wails outside the gates of the madhouse, trying to enter "this house to which only man has the right of entry."

The traces of Maupassant's haunting, lifelong fear of insanity, his morbid preoccupation with the evil which was to cut him off at the height of his career, have been the favorite theme of many commentators. Stories like *Le Horla, Lui?* and *Qui Sait?* have been analyzed for evidence of the author's hallucinations and the premonitions of his end. These stories were all written after Maupassant had been stricken by the first symptoms of his terrible malady. Here, however, in "Dr. Heraclius Gloss," the same psychological preoccupations are apparent as in his later work. Yet, this was written at a time of complete mental health and bodily vigor, when

Maupassant was only twenty-five years of age.

In his prefatory note in the *Revue de Paris,* M. Jean Ossola draws attention to this apparent paradox, in order to refute, by implication, the conclusions which have been based upon the progressive insanity of Maupassant. "We think it right to emphasize the fact that, even at this early date, several years before his decisive achievements, Maupassant's mind was turned in that direction which, later on, served as a thesis for those critics who undertook to explain certain hallucinations written with a poignant intensity and realism. Yet, 'Dr. Heraclius Gloss' was composed by that fine athlete, full of life, of vigor, of physical and moral health, whom his friends at Médan knew. The fact is that Guy, even when very young, was always governed by a natural tendency to pessimism, as are almost all those whose souls respond to the

slightest vibrations around them, and whose minds register the most imperceptible shades of humanity with a painful lucidity and profusion."

There is no doubt, of course, that during those years of his early manhood Maupassant did present that appearance of health which caused Lemaître to describe him as looking like "a robust country gentleman," and earned for him such titles as "the melancholy bull." But, even in the expurgated and obviously incomplete correspondence of Maupassant with Flaubert it is only too evident that the former was constantly worried about his health. As early as 1876 Flaubert, clearly in reply to such complaints, was counselling moderation in all things. In 1880 Maupassant suffered from a specific affection of the eyes, which was diagnosed, even then, as the earliest symptom of general paralysis of the insane. Consequently, "Dr. Herac-

lius Gloss," so long withheld from publication, may now be counted amongst the documentary evidence upon which criticism has based its theories concerning the personal life of Maupassant as reflected in his writings.

In welcoming this addition to the collected works of Guy de Maupassant, it would be absurd to lay too much stress upon its pathological value. That element in his writings can never be overlooked, in view of the tragic dénouement of a career whose ten crowded years are unique in literature. "I came into the literary world like a meteor," Maupassant said to Heredia, shortly before the end, "and I shall leave it like a thunderbolt." As one turns over the pages of "Dr. Heraclius Gloss" the earlier no less than the later part of that metaphor recurs to one's thoughts. What a brilliant and sardonic mind was this which could conceive a philosophical tale in the great

Voltairian tradition, following an impulse which might have endowed modern French literature with another Anatole France. The latter was a man of mature years before he began to tap in himself that vein of satire to which he owes his fame. Maupassant began with no such innocuous and amiable ideas as landed Anatole France in the French Academy before his cloven hoof appeared.

I can imagine how old Flaubert must have enjoyed this story by his beloved pupil, with its underlying philosophy akin to that which prompted *Bouvard et Pécuchet.* It is probable, however, that Flaubert had some responsibility for turning Maupassant aside from such work as this. It was under his tutelage that the latter slowly evolved the perfection of style and matter which won instant recognition when the signature of Guy de Maupassant was put for the first

time to a work of prose fiction in *Boule de Suif*. All the contemporary stories were signed with pseudonyms, but even in that disguise Maupassant did not publish "Dr. Heraclius Gloss," yet he never destroyed it. A writer so economical of his material as he, and so critical of his own standards, must have been moved in this instance by some particular affection. He repeatedly used ideas, phrases and situations from one story to another, and he refused to collect in book form the greater part of the scattered work which was published posthumously. The number of previously unpublished pieces issued after his death is very small. "Dr. Heraclius Gloss" was never drawn upon and never discarded. It is the one complete manuscript of importance which he left in a state fit for posthumous publication. I like to fancy that he foresaw the conclusion that has at last been drawn from these facts, that he wanted us to

preserve it, to remind us of a moment when his path divided before him. One side led him back to the first great tradition of French literature, the *fabliaux,* the other invited him to join the second great tradition, which has expressed itself in a Montaigne, a Voltaire, an Anatole France. He chose the former.

ERNEST BOYD.

THE STORY OF DOCTOR HERACLIUS GLOSS

I. The Mental Faculties of Doctor Heraclius Gloss

DOCTOR Heraclius Gloss was a very learned man. Although no book of any description written by him had ever appeared in the bookshops of the town, all the inhabitants of the erudite city of Balançon regarded Doctor Heraclius Gloss as a very learned man.

How and of what was he a doctor? No one could say. No more was known than that his father and his grandfather had been called "Doctor" by their fellow citizens. He had inherited their title at

the same time that he had inherited their name and their possessions: in his family one became "Doctor" from father to son, just as, from son to father, one was called Heraclius Gloss.

But even though he possessed no diploma signed and countersigned by every member of some illustrious Faculty, Doctor Heraclius was, none the less, a very worthy and a very learned man. One had only to see the forty shelves loaded with books which covered the four panels of his vast study to be quite convinced that no more learned doctor had ever honored the city of Balançon. And, moreover, each time there was any mention of his name in the presence of either the Dean or the Warden, these worthies were always seen to smile mysteriously. It was even rumored that one day the Warden had delivered a long eulogy on him in Latin before the Archbishop; and the witness who told the

story quoted besides, as undeniable proof, these few words which he had heard:

Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus.

It was said, too, that the Dean and the Warden dined with him every Sunday; and thus no one would have dared to dispute that Doctor Heraclius Gloss was a very learned man.

II. The Physical Appearance of Doctor Heraclius Gloss

IF it is true, as certain philosophers claim, that there is perfect harmony between the mental and the physical sides of a man and that one can read in the lines of the face the principal traits of a character, then Doctor Heraclius was not created to give the lie to such assertion. He was small, alert and wiry. He had in him something of the rat, the ant and the terrier: that is to say, he was the kind of being which investigates, gnaws, hunts and never tires. Looking at him one could not understand how all the doctrines which he had studied could ever have found their way into so small a head, but one could imagine, on the other hand, that he himself could have

burrowed his way into science and lived there nibbling like a rat in a thick book.

What was most peculiar about him was the extraordinary thinness of his person; his friend the Dean pretended, perhaps not without reason, that he must have been forgotten for several centuries and pressed side by side with a rose and a violet in the leaves of a folio volume—for he was always very smart and addicted to scent. His face especially was so like a razor blade that the side-pieces of his gold spectacles, jutting far beyond his temples, had the effect of a great yard-arm on the mast of a ship.

"If he had not been the learned Doctor Heraclius," the Warden of the Faculty of Balançon declared, "he would certainly have made an excellent paper knife."

He wore a wig, dressed with care, was never ill, loved animals, did not detest his fellow men and adored roast quails.

III. How Doctor Heraclius used to Spend his Days

AS soon as the Doctor was up, washed and shaved, and had partaken of a roll and butter dipped in a cup of chocolate flavored with vanilla, he went down into his garden. Like all town gardens it was not very big, but it was pleasant, shady, full of flowers, quiet and, one might almost say, conducive to thought. In short, if one tried to picture the ideal garden for a philosopher in search of Truth, one would get some notion of the one round which Doctor Heraclius Gloss took three or four brisk turns before settling down to his daily lunch of roast quail. This little stroll, he used to say, was excellent the first thing in the morning; it quickened one's

circulation, numbed by sleep, cleared one's brain and toned up the digestive organs.

After that the Doctor had his lunch. Then, as soon as he had drunk his coffee —which he did at one gulp, for he never gave way to the sleepiness provoked by the digestive process begun at table—he donned his big overcoat and went out. And each day, after having passed the Faculty and checked the time by his clumsy Louis XV watch with that of the haughty dial of the university clock, he disappeared into the *Ruelle des Vieux Pigeons,* whence he emerged only to return to his dinner.

What used Doctor Heraclius Gloss to do in the *Ruelle des Vieux Pigeons?* What used he to do, in Heaven's name? Why, he sought philosophic truth there, and this was his way of doing so.

All the booksellers' shops in Balançon were collected in this obscure and dirty

little alley, and it would have taken years to read the titles alone of all the out of the way works which lay piled from cellar to attic in each of the fifty hovels which comprised the *Ruelle des Vieux Pigeons*. Doctor Heraclius Gloss considered the alley, its houses, its booksellers and its books as his own particular property. It often happened that as some bric-à-brac merchant was on his way to bed, he would hear a noise in his attic and would creep stealthily up, armed with a gigantic old-fashioned torch, only to find Doctor Heraclius Gloss, buried to his waist in a pile of books, holding with one hand the remains of a candle which was melting between his fingers, and with the other hand turning the leaves of some old manuscript from which he hoped the Truth would spring. And the poor Doctor would be surprised to hear that the belfry clock had struck nine long since and that he would have to eat a detestable dinner.

He took his research seriously, did Doctor Heraclius.

He had plumbed the depths of all philosophies, ancient and modern; he had studied the sects of India and the religions of the negroes of Africa; there was no tribe, however insignificant, among the barbarians of the north or the savages of the south whose superstitions he had not sounded. But alas! alas! the more he used to study, to search, to investigate and meditate, the more undecided he became.

"My friend," said he to the Warden one evening, "how much happier than we are men like Columbus who launch themselves across the seas in search of a new world! They have only to go straight ahead. The difficulties they have to face are no more than material obstacles which a stalwart man will always surmount; whilst we, tossed incessantly on an ocean of uncertainty, roughly

carried away by a hypothesis like a ship by the North Wind, we suddenly encounter, as though it were a headwind, an opposing doctrine, which drives us back without hope to the port from which we started."

One night when he was philosophizing with the Dean he said to the latter:

"How right we are, my friend, to say that truth lives in a well. Buckets go down for fish, but they never bring up anything but clear water. I will leave you to guess," he added pointedly, "how I would spell the first word." *

It was the only pun he was ever heard to make.

* A play on the words "Sceaux" (buckets) and "Sots" (fools).—*Translator's Note.*

IV. How Doctor Heraclius Spent his Nights

WHEN Doctor Heraclius returned home he was generally much fatter than when he went out, for each of his pockets—and he had eighteen of them—was stuffed with old books of a philosophical nature, which he had just bought in the *Ruelle des Vieux Pigeons;* and the facetious Rector would pretend that if a chemist had analyzed him at that moment it would have been found quite two-thirds of the Doctor's composition was old paper.

At seven o'clock Heraclius Gloss sat down to table and as he ate perused the ancient books which he had just acquired. At half-past eight he rose with dignity:

he was no longer the alert and lively little man that he had been all day, but a serious thinker whose brow was bent under the weight of deep meditation, like the shoulders of a porter under too heavy a load. Having thrown to his housekeeper a majestic: "I am at home to no one," he disappeared into his study, and once there sat down before a desk heaped with books and . . . pondered. Truly a strange sight for any one who could have seen into the Doctor's mind at that moment—this monstrous procession of contrasting divinities and disparate beliefs, this fantastic interlacing of doctrines and hypotheses. His mind was like an arena in which the champions of all the philosophies tilted against each other in a colossal tournament. He amalgamated, combined, and mixed the old Oriental spiritualism with German materialism, the ethics of the Apostles with those of the Epicureans. He tried combinations

of doctrine as one experiments in a laboratory with chemical compounds, but without ever seeing the Truth which he so much desired come bubbling to the surface; and his good friend the Warden maintained that this philosophic truth, eternally waited, was very like a philosopher's stone—a stumbling block.

At midnight the Doctor went to bed and his dreams when asleep were the same as those of his waking hours.

V. How the Dean Placed his Hopes in Eclecticism, the Doctor in Revelation and the Warden in Digestion

ONE evening when the Dean, the Warden and the Doctor were together in the latter's vast study, they had a most interesting discussion.

"My friend," said the Warden, "one ought to be an eclectic and an epicurean. Choose that which is good and reject that which is evil. Philosophy is a huge garden which extends all over the world. Pluck the dazzling flowers of the East, the pale blossoms of the North, the wild violets and cultivated roses, make a nosegay of them and inhale its perfume. If that perfume is not the most exquisite

that you could imagine, it will at least be a thousand times more agreeable and more fragrant than that of a single flower —be its scent the strongest in the world."

"More varied, certainly," replied the Doctor, "but more fragrant, no—not at least if one could but find the flower which combines and concentrates in itself the scents of all the others. For in your bouquet you would not be able to prevent certain smells from destroying each other; and, in philosophy, certain beliefs from contradicting each other. The truth is a one whole—and with your eclecticism you will never obtain other than a truth composed of fragments. I too have been an eclectic, but now I am an absolutist. What I desire is not a chance approximation, but the absolute truth. Every intelligent man, has, I believe, the presentiment of it and on the day when he meets it on his path he will cry: 'There it is at last!' It is the same

thing where beauty is concerned. In my own case I did not know love until I was twenty-five. I had seen pretty women, but they had not stirred me. It would have been necessary to take something from each of them to form the ideal being whom I dimly perceived, and even then, as with the bouquet of which you spoke just now, I should not have obtained perfect beauty—which is indissoluble, like gold and the truth. But one day I at last met that woman; I knew that it was she and I loved her."

Somewhat agitated, the Doctor paused, and the Warden looked towards the Dean with a shrewd smile. After a moment Heraclius Gloss went on:

"It is revelation that we must wait for. It was revelation which lit the way for the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus, and brought him to the Christian faith. . . ."

"Which, for you, is not the true faith,"

interrupted the Warden with a laugh, "since you do not believe in it. So revelation is no more sure than eclecticism."

"Pardon me, my friend," retorted the Doctor. "Paul was not a philosopher. He had only a half-revelation; but his mind could not grasp the absolute truth, which is abstract. But philosophy has progressed since then, and on the day when some circumstance or other—a book, or a word perhaps—reveals the truth to a man enlightened enough to understand it, it will suddenly make everything clear and all superstition will vanish before it as the stars vanish at sunrise."

"Amen!" said the Warden, "but tomorrow a second man will be enlightened and a third on the day after. Then they will hurl their revelations at each other's heads. Luckily, though, revelations are not very dangerous weapons."

"But don't you believe in anything

then?" exclaimed the Doctor, who was beginning to get angry.

"I believe in digestion," replied the Warden solemnly. "I swallow with indifference every creed, dogma, morality, superstition, hypothesis and illusion, just as at a good dinner I eat with equal pleasure hors d'œuvre, soup, joint, vegetables, sweets and dessert, after which I stretch myself philosophically on my bed, assured that my undisturbed digestion will bring me pleasant sleep during the night and life and health on the following morning."

"Take my advice," the Dean hastened to interpose, "and don't let us push the comparison any farther."

An hour afterwards, as they were leaving the house of the learned Heraclius, the Warden suddenly began to laugh and said:

"Poor Doctor, if the truth appears before him as the woman he loved did, he

will be the most deceived man that the world has ever known."

And a drunkard who was making his way home with difficulty fell down from sheer fright when he heard the Dean's boisterous laugh mingling its deep bass with the Warden's piercing falsetto.

VI. How for the Doctor the Road to Damascus Turned Out to be the Ruelle des Vieux Pigeons, and How the Truth was Revealed to Him in the Form of a Metempsychosic Manuscript

ON the 17th March in the year of grace 17—, the Doctor woke up in a feverish condition. During the night he had several times in his dreams seen a tall white man, dressed in patriarchal robes, who touched him on the forehead with his finger and spoke unintelligible words. To the learned Heraclius this dream seemed to be a very significant warning. But why a warning and significant of what? The doctor did not know exactly, but nevertheless he was expectant of something.

After his lunch he went as usual to the *Ruelle des Vieux Pigeons* and just as it was striking noon entered No. 31, the shop belonging to Nicholas Bricolet, outfitter, dealer in antique furniture, secondhand bookseller, and in his spare time cobbler as well. The Doctor, as though moved by an inspiration, climbed at once to the attic, put his hand up to the third shelf of a Louis XIII bookcase, and took down from it a bulky parchment manuscript, entitled:

MY EIGHTEEN METEMPSYCHOSES.
AN ACCOUNT OF MY EXISTENCES
SINCE THE YEAR CLXXXIV OF
THE SO-CALLED CHRISTIAN ERA.

Immediately following this singular title was the following introduction, which Heraclius Gloss deciphered forthwith.

"This manuscript, which contains the true story of my transmigrations, was begun by me in the city of Rome in the

year 184 of the Christian era, as stated above. This explanation, destined to enlighten mankind on the alternations of re-appearances of the soul, is signed by me, this 16th day of April 1748, in the town of Balançon, where I have been cast by the vicissitudes of my fate.

"Let any clear-headed man, intent upon the problems of philosophy, scan these pages, and light will be revealed to him in the most startling way.

"For this reason I am going to summarize in a few lines the substance of my story, which can be studied below, however little the reader may know of Latin, Greek, German, Italian, Spanish and French; for in the different epochs when I have re-appeared as a human being, I have lived among divers peoples. Next I will explain by what chain of ideas, what psychological precautions and what mnemonic devices I arrived at certain infallible metempsychosic conclusions.

"In the year 184 I was living in Rome and was a philosopher. As I was strolling one day along the Appian Way the idea occurred to me that Pythagoras might well have been like the still faint dawn of a great day soon to come. From that moment I had but one desire, one aim, one constant preoccupation—to remember my past. But alas! all my efforts were in vain. There came back to me no memory of my previous existence.

"Now, one day I saw by chance on the pedestal of a statue of Jupiter which stood in my entrance hall, certain marks which I had carved there in my youth and which suddenly reminded me of an event long since forgotten. This was like a ray of light to me; and I realized that if a few years, sometimes one night, even, were sufficient to efface a memory, how much more certainly things accomplished in previous existences and over which had passed the great sleep of intermediate

animal lives, would disappear from our remembrance.

"So I carved my own history on stone tablets in the hope that fate would one day put them before my eyes again and that for me they would act like the writing on the pedestal of the statue.

"It happened as I wished. A century later, when I was an architect, I was instructed to demolish an old house on the site of which a palace was to be built.

"One day the workmen under me brought me a broken stone covered with writing, which they had found when preparing the foundations. I set myself to decipher it and as I was reading the life of whoever had written the lines, there came back to me in an instant glimmers of light from a forgotten past. Little by little daylight penetrated my soul. I understood. I remembered. It was I who had engraved that stone.

"But during this interval of a century, what had I done and what had I been? Under what form had I suffered? Nothing could teach me that. One day, however, I had a clue, but it was so faint and vague that I dared not rely upon it. An old man, a neighbor of mine, told me that fifty years previously (just nine months before I was born) much amusement was caused in Rome by an adventure which happened to the Senator Marcus Antonius Cornelius Lipa. His wife, who was good looking and very perverse, so it was said, had purchased from the Phœnician merchants, a large monkey of which she became very fond. The Senator Cornelius Lipa was jealous of the affection which his better half showed for this four-handed beast with the face of a man, and killed him. In listening to this story I had a very vague idea that that monkey was myself and that in that form I had suffered for a long

time as a penalty for some moral fall, but I gathered nothing very clearly or precisely. However, I was led to establish the following hypothesis, which is at least quite plausible.

"To take the form of an animal is a penance imposed upon the soul for crimes committed as a human being. Recollection of higher existences is given to the beast in order to punish him by the consciousness of his fall. Only a soul which has been purified by suffering can regain human form; it then forgets the animal periods through which it has passed, since it is regenerated and since such knowledge would imply unmerited suffering. Consequently Man should preserve and respect the beasts, just as one respects a sinner who is expiating his evil-doing, and also in order that others may protect him when he in his turn re-appears in animal form. This, in effect, is analogous to the Christian precept: 'Do not unto

others what you would not have done unto you.'

"The account of my transmigrations will show how I had the good fortune to re-discover my memories in each of my existences; how I transcribed the story anew, first on brass tablets, then on Egyptian papyrus, and at length, long afterwards, on German parchment, such as I am using to-day.

"It remains for me to deduce from this doctrine its philosophic conclusion. Every philosophy has been arrested before the insoluble problem of the destiny of the soul. The Christian dogma which prevails nowadays asserts that God will bring together the righteous in Paradise and will send the wicked to Hell where they will burn with the Devil. But modern common sense no longer believes in a God with the countenance of a patriarch sheltering the souls of the good under his wings as a hen shelters her chickens.

Moreover, reason contradicts Christian dogma, for Paradise and Hell cannot be nowhere.

"Since space, which is infinite, is filled with worlds similar to our own; since by multiplying the generations which have succeeded each other since the beginning of this world, by those which have teemed in the innumerable worlds inhabited as our own is, one would arrive at a total of souls so supernatural and impossible—the multiplication thereof being infinite—that God would infallibly lose his head —sound though it may be—and the Devil woud be in the same case, thus producing a grievous disturbance; since the number of righteous souls is infinite, just as the number of wicked souls is infinite and space itself is infinite: therefore it would be necessary to have an infinite Paradise and an infinite Hell—facts which bring us to this: that Paradise would be everywhere and Hell

everywhere—that is to say nowhere.

"Now Reason does not contradict the metempsychosic faith. The soul, passing from the snake to the pig, from the pig to the bird, from the bird to the dog, arrives at last at the monkey and then at Man. The soul always starts afresh when each new fault is committed, up till the moment when it achieves the fulfillment of terrestrial purification which permits it to pass on to a superior world. Thus it progresses unceasingly from beast to beast and from sphere to sphere, going from the most imperfect state to the most perfect, in order to arrive at last in the planet of supreme happiness whence a fresh fault will again precipitate it into the regions of supreme suffering to recommence its transmigrations.

"The circle, that universal and fatal sign, encloses then the vicissitudes of our existences just as it governs the evolution of worlds."

VII. How One may Interpret a Couplet by Corneille in Two Ways

BY the time the Doctor had finished reading this strange document, he was rigid with stupefaction. Then without any bargaining he bought it for the sum of twelve pounds and fivepence halfpenny, allowing the bookseller to pass it off on him as a Hebrew manuscript recovered from the excavations at Pompeii.

The Doctor remained in his study for four days and nights, and by dint of patience and with the help of dictionaries, managed to decipher, more or less successfully, the German and Spanish periods of the manuscript: for though he knew Greek, Latin and a little Italian, he was almost entirely ignorant of German and

Spanish. At length, fearing that he might have grossly misinterpreted the sense, he begged his friend, the Warden, who was deeply versed in these two languages, to correct the translation. This the latter did with pleasure; but it was three whole days before he could set himself seriously to the task, because every time he glanced through the doctor's version he was overcome by a fit of laughter so prolonged and so violent that twice he almost had convulsions. When he was asked the reason of this extraordinary hilarity he replied:—

"The reason? Well, there are three: firstly, the ridiculous face of my worthy colleague Heraclius: secondly, his equally ridiculous translation, which is as much like the text as a guitar is like a windmill: and lastly, the text itself, which is as queer a thing as one could possibly imagine."

Oh, obstinate Warden! Nothing

could convince him. The sun itself might have come in person to burn his beard and his hair and he would have taken it for a candle. As for Doctor Heraclius Gloss, it need hardly be said that he was radiant, enlightened, transformed. Like Pauline, he kept repeating every other moment:

"I see, I feel, I believe, I am disillusioned." And each time the Warden interrupted him to observe that disillusioned could be written in two ways.*

"I see, I feel, I believe, I am among the deluded."

* Désabusé—Disillusioned. Des abusés—Amongst the deluded.—*Translator's note.*

VIII. How, Just as One can be More Royalist than the King and More Devout than the Pope, One can Equally be More of a Metempsychosist than Pythagoras

GREAT as may be the joy of a shipwrecked man who has drifted for long days and nights lost on the ocean on a fragile raft, without mast or sail or compass and without hope, when he suddenly sights the shore which he has so long desired, such joy was as nothing compared with that which swept over Doctor Heraclius Gloss when, after being for so long tossed by the surge of the philosophies on the raft of uncertainty, he entered at length, triumphant and enlightened, the haven of metempsychosis.

The truth of this doctrine had struck him so forcibly that he embraced it at once even to its most extreme conclusions. Nothing in it was obscure to him, and in a few days, by means of meditation and calculations, he reached the point of being able to fix the exact date on which a man who died in such a year would reappear on earth. He knew approximately the time of all the transmigrations of a soul through the series of inferior beings, and according to the presumed total of good or evil accomplished in the last period of its life as a human being, he could tell the moment when this soul would enter into the body of a snake, a pig, a riding horse, an ox, a dog, an elephant or a monkey. The reappearances of a given soul in its superior form succeeded each other at regular intervals whatever might have been its previous sins. Thus the degree of punishment, always in proportion to the degree of culpability, consisted, not

in the duration of exile under animal forms, but in the sojourn, more or less long, which the soul had to make within the body of an impure beast. The scale of beasts began in inferior degrees with the snake or the pig and ended with the monkey "which is Man deprived of speech," said the Doctor: to which his worthy friend, the Warden, always replied that by the same process of reasoning Heraclius Gloss was nothing else but a monkey endowed with speech.

IX. Obverse and Reverse

DOCTOR HERACLIUS was very happy during the days following his surprising discovery. He lived in a state of downright jubilation, he was full of the glory of difficulties overcome, of mysteries unveiled, of great hopes realized. Metempsychosis encompassed him like the sky. It seemed to him that a curtain had been suddenly torn down and that his eyes had been opened to things hitherto unknown.

He made his dog sit at table beside him, and in solemn *tête-à-têtes* before the fire sought to discover in the eye of the innocent beast the mystery of its previous existences.

He realized, however, that there were two dark blots on his happiness—the

Dean and the Warden. The Dean shrugged his shoulders furiously every time Heraclius tried to convert him to the metempsychosic doctrine, and the Warden annoyed him with the most uncalled-for jests. These latter were quite intolerable. No sooner did the Doctor begin to expound his faith than the diabolical Warden instantly agreed with him; he pretended he was an adept listening to the words of a great apostle and he invented the most unlikely animal genealogies for every person of their mutual acquaintance. Thus he would say that Laboude, the Cathedral bellringer, from the time of his first transmigration could never have been anything but a melon, and that since then he had scarcely changed at all, being content to ring morning and evening the bell under which he had grown. He pretended that the Abbé Rosencroix, senior curate at St. Eulalie, had undoubtedly been a destruc-

tive crow, for he had preserved both its dress and its functions. Then, inverting the rôles in the most deplorable manner, he would declare that M. Bocaille, the chemist, was only a degenerate ibis, since he was obliged to use an instrument to administer a remedy so simple that, according to Herodotus, the sacred bird used to give it to himself with no other help than that of his long beak.

X. How a Mountebank can be More Cunning than a Learned Doctor

NEVERTHELESS, Doctor Heraclius continued his series of discoveries without becoming discouraged. Henceforth every animal had a mysterious significance in his eyes. He ceased to see the beast itself in contemplating the man who was purifying himself in its guise; and at the very sight of this invisible sign of expiation he would speculate upon the past sins of the soul dwelling therein.

One day when he was strolling in the Square at Balançon, he saw a large wooden hut from which came the sound of terrible howling, while on the platform a mountebank incoherently invited the crowd to come and see the terrible

apache tamer Tomahawk or Rumbling Thunder. Heraclius, much impressed, paid the penny demanded and went in. O Fortune that watches over great minds! Hardly had he entered the hut when he saw an enormous cage on which were written words that flamed suddenly before his dazzled eyes: *The Man of the Woods.* The Doctor immediately experienced that nervous shiver which accompanies a great mental shock, and trembling with emotion, went nearer. He saw an enormous monkey sitting quietly on its posterior with its legs crossed like a tailor or a Turk. Before this superb specimen of man in his last transmigration, Heraclius Gloss, pale with joy, stood lost in profound meditation. After a few minutes, the Man of the Woods, divining, without doubt, the irresistible sympathy suddenly produced in the heart of the Man of Cities, who

was stubbornly staring at him, began to make such a frightful grimace at his regenerate brother that the Doctor felt the hairs of his head stand on end. Then, having executed a fantastic somersault absolutely incompatible with the dignity of a man, even of a man completely fallen in estate, the four-handed gentleman gave way to the most unseemly hilarity at the sight of the Doctor's beard. The Doctor, however, found nothing shocking in the gayety of this victim of former sins. On the contrary he saw in it one similarity the more with mankind, a still greater probability of relationship; and his scientific curiosity became so intense that he resolved to buy this master of grimaces, no matter what the price, in order to study him at leisure. What an honor for himself, what a triumph for the great doctrine, if he succeeded at last in getting into communication with the animal

side of humanity, in understanding this poor monkey and making the monkey understand him!

Naturally enough the proprietor of the menagerie was loud in praise of his tenant: he was the most intelligent, gentle, well-behaved, lovable animal that he had ever seen in all his long career as a showman of wild beasts; and to prove his word he went close to the bars of the cage and put his hand inside. The monkey promptly bit it—by way of a joke. Naturally, too, the showman demanded a fabulous price. Heraclius paid it without argument. Then, preceded by two porters bent double under the enormous cage, the Doctor went off in triumph in the direction of his own home.

XI. In Which it is Shown that Heraclius Gloss was in no Way Exempt from All the Weaknesses of the Stronger Sex

BUT the nearer he got to his house, the slower he walked, for a problem, very very much more difficult than that of philosophic truth, was disturbing his mind—a problem which the unfortunate doctor formulated thus:

"By means of what subterfuge shall I be able to hide from my servant Honorine the introduction into my house of this human being in the rough?"

Ah! the luckless Heraclius, who undaunted could face the formidable shrugs of the Dean's shoulders and the terrible chaff of the Warden, was far from being

as brave before the outbursts of his servant Honorine. But why should the Doctor have been so afraid of this fresh-faced, pleasant little woman who seemed so brisk and so devoted to her master's interests? Ask why Hercules dallied at the feet of Omphale, and why Samson allowed Delilah to rob him of his strength and his courage, which, as the Bible tells us, were in his hair.

One day, alas! when the Doctor was walking in the fields, nursing his despair over a great passion wherein he had been betrayed (for it was not without cause that the Dean and the Warden were so much amused on their way home on a certain evening) he met at a hedge corner a little girl tending sheep. The learned man, who had not always and exclusively been searching for philosophic truth and who, besides, did not at that time suspect the great mystery of metempsychosis, instead of paying attention to the sheep,

as he certainly would have done, if he had known facts of which he was then ignorant, began, alas! to chat with her who tended them. Soon after he took her into his service and this first act of weakness led to further ones. He became one of his shepherdess' sheep himself after a little while, and it was whispered that although this rustic Delilah, like the one in the Bible, had cut off the hair of the poor unsuspecting man, she had not on that account deprived his forehead of all ornament.

Alas! what he had foreseen came to pass and even exceeded his expectations. At the very sight of the inhabitant of the woods in his wire cage, Honorine abandoned herself to an outburst of unbecoming fury and having overwhelmed her master with a shower of most ill-sounding epithets, turned to let her anger fall upon her unexpected guest.

But the latter, doubtless because he had

not the same reason as had the Doctor to humor such an ill-mannered housekeeper, began to cry and howl and stamp and gnash his teeth: he clung to the bars of his cage in so furious a manner, and accompanied his action with gestures so entirely indiscreet in the presence of a person whom he was meeting for the first time that Honorine was forced to withdraw like a defeated warrior and shut herself up in her kitchen.

And so, master of the field and delighted with the unexpected help with which his intelligent companion had furnished him, Heraclius carried off his prize to his study and installed the cage and its occupant in front of the desk in a corner by the fire.

XII. Which Explains how Doctor and Animal Tamer are in no Way Synonymous

THEN began an exchange of significant glances between the two individuals who found themselves together, and each day for a whole week the Doctor passed long hours in conversing by means of his eyes (so, at least, he thought) with the interesting subject which he had acquired. But that was not enough. What Heraclius wanted was to study the animal at liberty, to surprise its secrets, its desires, its thoughts, to allow it to come and go at will, and through the daily companionship of a life of intimacy, to watch it recover forgotten habits and thus to identify by unmistakable signs the memory of a

former life. But for this his guest would have to be free, that is to say, the cage would have to be opened. Now this undertaking was simply a matter of putting his fear aside. In vain the Doctor tried the influence of personal magnetism, and then that of cakes and nuts. The monkey started playing tricks which made him nervous every time he came close to the bars of the cage. But one day he was no longer able to resist the desire which tormented him and he went brusquely forward, turned the key in the padlock, opened the door wide, and, trembling with emotion, stood back a little way awaiting the upshot, which be it said, was not long in coming.

The astonished monkey hesitated at first and then in one bound was outside his cage and in another on the table. In a second he had upset all the papers and books; then a third jump took him into the arms of the Doctor and the evidence

of his affection was so violent that if Heraclius had not worn a wig, his last hairs would undoubtedly have remained between the fingers of his redoubtable brother. But if the monkey was agile, the Doctor was not less so. He sprang first to the right, then to the left, slipped like an eel under the table, cleared the sofa like a hare and, still hotly pursued, gained the door and shut it quickly behind him. Then, panting like a horse at the finish of a race, he leant against the wall to save himself from collapsing.

Heraclius Gloss was prostrate for the rest of the day. He felt thoroughly upset, but what principally concerned him was that he had absolutely no idea how he and his thoughtless guest would be enabled to leave their respective positions. He brought a chair up to the door, fortunately impassable, and used the keyhole as an observatory. Then he saw O prodigy! O unhoped-for happiness! the

fortunate conqueror stretched on the sofa warming his feet at the fire. In his first transport of joy the Doctor almost went back into the room, but reflection checked him; and, though guided by a sudden light, he told himself that starvation would no doubt succeed where kindness had failed. This time he was proved right and the hungry monkey capitulated.

In other respects he was a good fellow, that monkey. Reconciliation was complete, and from that day forward the Doctor and his companion lived like old friends.

XIII. How Doctor Heraclius Gloss Found Himself in Exactly the same Position as Good King Henry IV Who, having Heard Two Leading Counsel Plead their Case, was of Opinion that Both were Right

SOME time after this memorable day heavy rain prevented Doctor Heraclius from going into his garden as was his custom, and he spent the whole morning in his study considering his monkey in a philosophic spirit. The monkey, perched on a writing table, amused himself by throwing paper balls at the dog, Pythagoras, who was lying stretched on the hearth rug. The Doctor, meanwhile, was studying the gradations and the progress in intellect of declassed

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men and comparing the degree of subtlety displayed by the two animals which he had with him.

"In the dog," said the Doctor to himself, "instinct still dominates, whilst in the monkey reason prevails. The former smells, hears, and sees with those marvelous organs which for him are a good half of his intelligence; the latter, connecting one fact with another, cogitates."

At this moment the monkey, made impatient by the indifference and immobility of his enemy who, with his head between his paws, was content to lift his eyes occasionally towards his securely-placed aggressor, decided to come down and reconnoiter. He jumped lightly from the table and crept quietly forward —so quietly indeed that there was not a sound except for the crackling of the fire and the ticking of the clock which seemed to make a tremendous noise in the dead silence of the study. Then with a sharp

and unexpected movement, he seized in both hands the fluffy tail of the unfortunate Pythagoras. But the latter, motionless up till that moment, had followed every movement of the monkey. His stillness was only a trap to lure his hitherto unassailable adversary within reach. As soon as ever Master Monkey, pleased with his trick, grabbed Pythagoras' tail, the latter bounded up and before the other could escape, had fixed his strong teeth in that portion of his rival's body which is modestly known as the ham. It is doubtful how the struggle would have ended had not Heraclius intervened, but when he had reëstablished peace, he asked himself, as he sat down again quite out of breath, whether, all things considered, his dog had not on this occasion shown more cunning than the animal commonly referred to as "Cunning Personified." Heraclius remained plunged in deep perplexity.

XIV. How Heraclius all but Devoured a Dish of Beautiful Ladies of a Past Age

WHEN lunch time came, the Doctor went into dining room, sat down at the table, tucked his napkin into his coat, and set the precious manuscript open beside him. But as he was about to lift to his mouth a little wing of quail, plump and savory, he glanced at the holy book and the few lines on which his eyes fell glittered more terribly before him than did those famous words suddenly written on the wall by an unknown hand in the banqueting hall of the celebrated King Belshazzar.

This is what the Doctor saw:

"Abstain from all food which once had life, for in eating flesh you are eating

your own kind: and he who, having fathomed the grand metempsychosic truth, kills and devours animals that are nought else but men in their inferior forms, shall be graded with the ferocious cannibal who feasts upon his vanquished foe."

And on the table, fresh and plump, held together by a little silver skewer and giving out an appetizing smell, were half a dozen quails.

The fight between mind and stomach was terrible, but be it said to Heraclius' glory, it was short. The poor man, quite overcome and afraid lest he would not for long be able to resist such fearful temptation, rang for his servant and in a broken voice enjoined her to remove forthwith the abominable dish and to serve henceforth only eggs, milk and vegetables. Honorine almost collapsed on hearing this surprising statement. She would have protested, but before the

inflexible eye of her master she hurried off with the condemned birds, consoling herself, however, with the agreeable thought that, generally speaking, what is one person's loss is not every one else's.

"Quails, quails! What could quails have been in another life?" the wretched Heraclius asked himself as he sadly ate a superb cauliflower *à la crème,* which seemed to him on this occasion disastrously nasty. "What sort of human being could have been elegant enough, delicate and fine enough, to pass into the exquisite little bodies of these roguish, pretty birds? Ah, doubtless it could only have been the adorable little mistresses of bygone times" . . . and the Doctor grew even paler at the thought of having eaten for his lunch every day for more than thirty years half a dozen beautiful ladies of a past age.

XV. How the Warden Interpreted God's Commandments

ON the evening of this unlucky day the Dean and the Warden came to talk for an hour or two with Heraclius in his study. The Doctor straightway told them of his embarrassing position and explained to them how quails and other edible animals were now prohibited to him just as ham was to a Jew. Whereupon the Dean, who no doubt had had a bad dinner, lost all control and blasphemed in such a terrible way that the poor Doctor, although he respected him even while deploring his blindness, did not know where to hide himself. As for the Warden, he entirely approved of Heraclius' scruples, pointing out to him that a disciple of Pythago-

ras who fed on the flesh of animals would expose himself to the risk of eating his father's ribs garnished with mushrooms or the truffled feet of his ancestor; and he quoted in support of his case the Fourth Commandment of the Christian God:

" 'Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land . . .'

"It is true," he added, "that I, who am not a believer, rather than let myself die of hunger, would prefer to change the divine precept slightly—or rather to replace it by this:

" 'Devour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long in the land.' "

XVI. How the Forty-Second Reading of the Manuscript Shed New Light into the Doctor's Mind

JUST as a rich man can derive new pleasures and new satisfactions from his great fortune, so Doctor Heraclius, in possession of the inestimable manuscript, made surprising discoveries therein each time that he reread it.

One evening when he had finished reading it for the forty-second time, a sudden idea flashed upon him like lightning. As we have already seen, the Doctor could tell approximately at what date a man who had disappeared would end his transmigrations and reappear in his first form. He was thus suddenly thunderstruck by the thought that the author of the manuscript might have regained

his place in humanity. Then, as feverishly excited as an alchemist who thinks himself on the point of discovering the philosopher's stone, he set to work on the most minute calculations to establish the probability of this supposition and after several hours of persistent work on abstruse metempsychosic deductions, he managed to convince himself that this man must be his contemporary or at any rate be on the point of being reborn to the life of reason. But Heraclius possessed no document which indicated the precise date of the great metempsychosist's death and therefore could not fix for certain the moment of his return.

He had hardly glimpsed the possibility of discovering this being who in his eyes was more than man, more than philosopher, almost more than God, when he was conscious of one of those profound emotions such as one experiences when one suddenly learns that one's father,

whom for years one had thought dead, is living and close to one. A holy anchorite who had sustained himself all his life on the love and remembrance of Christ and who realized suddenly that his God was about to appear before him, would not have been more overcome than was Doctor Heraclius when he had convinced himself that he would one day meet the author of the manuscript.

XVII. How Doctor Heraclius Gloss Set about Finding the Author of the Manuscript

A FEW days later readers of the *Balançon Star* noted with astonishment on the fourth page of the paper the following advertisement:

PYTHAGORAS—ROME IN 184—memory recovered on the pedestal of a statue of Jupiter—philosopher, architect, soldier, workman, monk, surveyor, doctor, poet, sailor—think and remember—the story of your life is in my hands. Write H.G. c/o P. O. Balançon.

The Doctor never doubted that if the man whom he so eagerly desired to find happened to read this notice, incomprehensible to every one else, he would at once grasp its hidden meaning and put in

an appearance. So every day before sitting down to his meal he went to the Post Office to ask if there were any letters addressed to H.G. and each time he pushed open the door on which was written "Letters, Inquiries, Pre-payments," he was actually more agitated than a lover on the point of opening his first letter from his mistress.

But alas! day followed day and was despairingly like its predecessor: the clerk gave the Doctor the same answer each morning; and each morning the latter returned home more gloomy and more discouraged. But the inhabitants of Balançon, like everybody else in the world, were subtle, indiscreet, slanderous and inquisitive, and soon connected the surprising notice inserted in the *Star* with the daily visits of the Doctor to the Post Office. And then they asked themselves what mystery there was in the affair and began to discuss it.

XVIII. In Which Doctor Heraclius Recognizes with Amazement the Author of the Manuscript

ONE night, being unable to sleep, the Doctor got up between one and two in the morning to reread a passage that he thought he had not quite understood. He put on his slippers and opened the door of his room as softly as possible so as not to disturb all the "human-animals" who were expiating their sins under his roof. Whatever had been the previous circumstances of these lucky creatures, they had certainly never before enjoyed such perfect peace and happiness, for such was the kindness of heart of the good man that in his hospitable house they found food, lodging and everything else. Without mak-

ing a sound, the Doctor reached his study door and went in. Now Heraclius was without doubt a courageous man. He was not afraid of spectres or ghosts; but however fearless a man may be, there exist certain terrors which, like cannon balls, will pierce the most indomitable courage. The Doctor stood transfixed, livid, horror-stricken, his eyes haggard and his hair on end, his teeth chattering and his whole body quivering from head to foot in a dreadful way, before the incomprehensible sight which confronted him.

His lamp was alight on his table, and before the fire, with his back turned to the door by which he himself had entered, he saw . . . Doctor Heraclius Gloss, studiously perusing his manuscript. There was no possible doubt. It was certainly himself. Over his shoulders was his own long silk dressing-gown embroidered with large red flowers, and on

his head was his Greek cap made of black velvet traced in gold. The Doctor realized that if this other self of his were to turn round, if the two Heraclius' were to see each other face to face, he, who was shaking in his skin at that very moment, would fall shriveled before this reproduction of himself. Then another nervous spasm caused his hands to twitch, and the candlestick which he was carrying fell to the floor with a crash that made him jump in terror. His other self turned sharply round and the petrified Doctor recognized—his monkey. For some seconds his thoughts whirled in his mind like dead leaves swept before a hurricane, and then he was suddenly overwhelmed by a sense of joy more violent than he had ever before experienced, for he realized that this author whom he had longed for as the Jews longed for the Messiah, was before him. It was his monkey. Nearly mad with

happiness, he dashed forward, seized the venerable being in his arms and embraced him more passionately than ever an adored mistress was clasped by her lover. Then he settled himself on the other side of the fireplace and remained there gazing at his companion until daylight came.

XIX. How the Doctor was Placed in a Terrible Dilemma

BUT just as the most beautiful summer days are sometimes abruptly spoiled by a fearful storm, so the Doctor's happiness was suddenly marred by a most awful possibility. He had found the being for whom he had been searching, certainly: but alas! it was only a monkey. Without doubt they would be able to understand each other, but they could never converse. The Doctor fell back from heaven to earth. Farewell to those long interviews from which he had hoped to gain so much, farewell to that wonderful crusade which they were to have undertaken together—the crusade against superstition! For, battling alone, the Doctor would not

possess weapons adequate to overthrow the hydra of ignorance. He needed a man, an apostle, a confessor, a martyr—a rôle which could scarcely be filled by a monkey! What was he to do? A menacing voice rang in his ears—"Kill him." Heraclius trembled. In a second he realized that if he killed the monkey the soul thus freed would immediately enter the body of an infant on the point of birth, and that it would then be necessary to wait at least twenty years before that infant reached maturity, by which time the Doctor would be seventy. It was possible, certainly. But could he be sure of tracing the man? Moreover, his religion forbade him to do away with any living being under penalty of committing a murder: therefore, if he did this his soul would pass after death into the body of a ferocious animal, as was decreed for a murderer. What did it matter? Would he not be a victim of science—

of his faith? He seized an enormous Turkish scimitar which was hanging against some tapestry and, like Abraham on the mountain, was about to strike, when a sudden thought restrained him. Supposing this man's sins were not yet expiated, and supposing his soul returned for a second time into the body of a monkey instead of passing into that of a child? This was possible, probable even, nearly certain in fact. In thus committing a futile crime, the Doctor would condemn himself to a terrible punishment without benefiting his fellowmen. Worn out, he dropped back into his chair. Such long drawn out emotion had exhausted him, and he fainted.

XX. In Which the Doctor has a Little Talk with his Servant

WHEN he opened his eyes it was seven o'clock, and Honorine was bathing his temples with vinegar. The Doctor's first thought was for his monkey, but the animal had disappeared.

"My monkey, where's my monkey?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, it's about time we did talk about him," retorted the servant, who was also a mistress and was always ready to lose her temper. "A bad thing for him to be lost, is it? A pretty creature, upon my word! He mimics everything he sees you do. Didn't I find him trying on your boots the other day? And then this morning, when I picked you up here—

and God knows what mad ideas you've got into your head lately—anyhow they prevent your having a decent night's rest —this wretched creature—devil, rather, in the form of a monkey—had put on your skullcap and your dressing gown. He was looking at you and seemed to be laughing, as though it were a huge joke to see a man who had fainted. Then, when I tried to get near, the brute went for me as though he wanted to eat me, but, thank heavens, I'm not frightened of him and I've got a good pair of hands. I fetched the shovel to him and I hit him so hard on his ugly back that he ran away into your room. He's probably up to some other mischievous trick there now."

"You hit my monkey!" roared the exasperated Doctor. "Understand this, my good woman, from now onwards he's to be respected and waited on like the master of the house."

"Well, well, he's not only the master

of the house, he's the master of the master, too, and has been for a long time past," grumbled Honorine, as she went off to her kitchen, convinced that Doctor Heraclius Gloss was certainly mad.

XXI. In Which it is Shown that a Dearly-Loved Friend can Lighten the Heaviest Sorrow

AS the Doctor had said, from that day onward the monkey was really master of the house, and Heraclius became the animal's humble valet. He thought of him with infinite tenderness for hours at a time, acted towards him with the thoughtfulness of a lover, lavished on him a whole dictionary of tender phrases, clasped his hand as one clasps that of a friend. When talking to him, he looked earnestly at him and explained the points in his arguments which might have been obscure. In fact he surrounded the creature's entire life with gentle care and delicate attention.

But the monkey accepted it all as calmly as a god receiving the homage of its worshipers. Heraclius, like all great minds living in solitude, isolated by their sublimity above the common level of foolishness of ordinary people, had up till then felt himself alone. Alone in his work, alone in his hopes, in his struggles and his failures, alone even in his discovery and his triumph. He had not yet preached his doctrine to the masses. He had not even been able to convince his most intimate friends, the Warden and the Dean. But from the day on which he discovered his monkey to be the great philosopher of his dreams, the Doctor felt less isolated.

As he was convinced that all animals were deprived of speech only because of past misdeeds, and that as part of the same punishment they were endowed with the remembrance of previous existences, He-

raclius became passionately devoted to his companion, and in doing this consoled himself for all the misery he had endured. For, as a fact, the Doctor's life had for some time past been growing sadder. The Warden and the Dean came to see him less frequently, and this made a large gap in his existence. They had even ceased coming to dinner on Sundays since he had decreed that no food which had once had life should be served at his table. This change of habit was a great sacrifice, even for him, and now and again it assumed the proportions of a genuine grief, for he who had hitherto awaited so eagerly the pleasant hour devoted to his lunch, now almost dreaded its arrival. He would go sadly into his dining room realizing that now there was nothing to look forward to. Moreover, he was continuously haunted by the thought of quails—a thought which plagued him

with remorse. But alas! it was not his remorse for having eaten so many—it was, on the contrary, his despair at having renounced them forever.

XXII. In Which the Doctor Discovers that his Monkey Resembles Him Even More than He Thought

ONE morning the Doctor was woken up by an unusual noise. He jumped out of bed, dressed hurriedly and made for the kitchen, from which came extraordinary sounds of shouting and kicking. For a long time past Honorine had been harboring in her mind black thoughts of vengeance against the intruder who had stolen her master's affection. At last the treacherous woman, knowing the tastes and habits of these animals, had managed, by means of some trick or other, to tie the poor monkey firmly to the leg of her kitchen table. Then when she was certain that he was held fast she went to the other end of the room and amused herself by tempting

him with a feast calculated to excite his greed, and thus inflicted on him the tortures of Tantalus—tortures such as are reserved in Hell for the worst sinners of all. The perverse housekeeper roared with laughter and invented further refinements of torture such as would only occur to a woman. The man-monkey writhed in fury when savory dishes were proffered from some way off, and in his rage at finding himself tied to the leg of the heavy table, made horrible faces, thereby adding to the enjoyment of his brutal temptress.

At last, just as the anxious Doctor appeared in the doorway, the victim of this hateful trick made a tremendous effort and succeeded in breaking the cords which held him. Had it not been for the hurried intervention of the indignant Heraclius, heaven knows what delicacies would not have been gobbled up by this new four-handed Tantalus.

XXIII. How the Doctor Realized that his Monkey had Shamefully Imposed upon Him

THIS time anger triumphed over respect; the doctor seized the monkey philosopher by the throat and dragged him howling into the study, where he administered the most terrible thrashing that the back of any metempsychosist had ever received.

The moment Heraclius' tired arm relaxed its hold on the throat of the wretched beast, who after all was only guilty of the same tastes as those of his human brother, the monkey freed himself from the grasp of his outraged master, jumped on to the table, seized the Doctor's big snuff box which was lying on a book and flung it, wide open, at its

owner's head. Heraclius just had time to close his eyes and avoid the whirlwind of snuff which would certainly have blinded him. When he opened them the criminal had disappeared, taking with him the manuscript of which he was presumed to be the author.

Heraclius' consternation was indescribable. He dashed like a madman in pursuit of the fugitive, determined to recover the precious manuscript at no matter what sacrifice. He explored the house from cellar to attic, opened all his cupboards and looked under all the furniture, but his search revealed nothing. At last he went and sat in despair under a tree in the garden. Presently he became aware of light little taps on his head, caused, so he thought at first, by dead leaves broken off by the wind. But suddenly he saw a little ball of paper rolling in front of him on the path. He picked it up and opened it. Mercy! It was a

page of his manuscript. Horrified, he looked up and saw his accursed monkey calmly preparing fresh missiles of the same kind, with an expression of malignant joy on his face that Satan himself could not have outdone when he saw Adam accept the fatal apple—that apple which, throughout the ages, from Eve to Honorine, women have never ceased offering us. At the sight of this a terrible thought flashed through the Doctor's mind and he realized that he had been deceived, tricked and mystified in the most abominable way by this hairy impostor, who was no more the missing philosopher than he was the Pope or the Grand Turk. The precious document would have disappeared altogether had not Heraclius caught sight of a garden hose near at hand. He snatched it up and, working it with almost superhuman strength, gave the wretch such a totally unexpected bath that he began to jump from branch

to branch with shrill cries. But the monkey, dodging cleverly to obtain a moment's respite, suddenly flung the torn parchment straight in his adversary's face, jumped down from the tree and fled towards the house. But before the manuscript had touched the doctor, the poor man had fallen on his back with his legs in the air, quite overcome with emotion. When he rose he had not the strength to avenge this new outrage but crept with difficulty back to his study where he discovered to his joy that only three pages were missing.

XXIV. Eureka!

A VISIT from the Dean and the Warden restored him. All three talked for an hour or two without mentioning metempsychosis; but when his two friends were leaving Heraclius could not contain himself any longer. While the Dean was struggling into his bearskin coat, he drew aside the Warden, of whom he was less afraid, and confided all his trouble to him. He told him how he thought he had found the author of the manuscript, how he had been mistaken, how the wretched monkey had played a most scandalous trick on him and how utterly in despair he felt. In fact, confronted with the ruin of his illusions, Heraclius broke down completely. The Warden, much moved,

clasped him by the hand and was just about to speak when the Dean's solemn voice calling out "Aren't you ever coming, Warden?" boomed from the hall.

"Come, come," said the Warden, with a final clasp of the unhappy Doctor's hand and the sort of smile with which one comforts a child who has been naughty, "cheer up, my friend. Perhaps after all you're the author of the manuscript yourself."

Then he went out into the dark street, leaving the astonished Heraclius on the doorstep.

The Doctor went slowly back to his study, muttering from time to time:

"Perhaps *I* am the author of the manuscript."

He made another careful study of the way in which the document had been recovered at each appearance of its author and then he recalled how he himself had found it. The dream which had pre-

ceded the happy day like a providential warning, the emotion he had felt on entering the *Ruelle des Vieux Pigeons*—all this came back to him, clearly, distinctly, surprisingly. And then he stood up, spreading out his arms as though he had seen a vision, and cried in a resounding voice:

"It is I! It is I!"

A shiver seemed to pass through the whole house. Pythagoras barked violently, the disturbed animals suddenly woke up and became so excited that it seemed as though each one was bent on celebrating in his own tongue the tremendous resurrection of the prophet of metempsychosis. Then, in the grip of an overwhelming emotion, Heraclius sat down, opened the last page of this new Bible and reverently added to it the entire history of his life.

XXV. "I Am That I Am"

FROM that day onwards Heraclius was filled with tremendous pride. In the same way that the Messiah sprang from God the Father, so he had sprung from Pythagoras—or rather he himself was Pythagoras, for in the past he had lived in the body of that philosopher. Thus his genealogy could challenge that of the most ancient families of the nobility. He looked with supreme contempt on all the great men in the history of the race and their highest achievements seemed as nothing beside his. He installed himself in sublime isolation among his worlds and his animals: he was metempsychosis itself and his house was its temple.

He had forbidden both his servant and his gardner to kill noxious animals.

Caterpillars and snails multiplied in his garden, and in the guise of enormous spiders with hairy legs one-time mortals paraded their loathsome transformation on the walls of his study—a fact which made the offensive Warden say that if all cadgers, each changed according to his kind, were to settle on the too sensitive-minded Doctor's skull, he would still take good care not to wage war on the poor degraded parasites. Only one thing troubled Heraclius in this superb flowering of his hopes: this was the continual spectacle of animals devouring each other —spiders lying in wait for flies, birds carrying off the spiders, cats gobbling up the birds, and his own dog Pythagoras joyfully mangling any cat which came within reach of his teeth.

From morning till night he followed the slow progressive march of metempsychosis at every degree in the animal scale. He received sudden revelations

when he watched sparrows pecking in the gutter: and ants, those ceaseless far-seeing workers, thrilled him intensely. In them he saw all the work-dodging, useless people who, as an expiation for their past idleness and nonchalance, had been condemned to persistent labor. He remained for hours at a time with his nose on the grass watching them and was amazed at what he saw. Then, like Nebuchadnezzar, he would crawl on all fours, rolling in the dust with his dog, living with his animals, even groveling with them. For him, Man gradually disappeared from creation, and soon he was only conscious of animals. When he thought of them he felt that he was their brother; he spoke to no one but them, and when by chance he was forced to talk to men, he found himself as helpless as though he was among foreigners, and was shocked at the stupidity of his fellow creatures.

XXVI. What was Said at Madame Labotte's, the Fruiterer's, 26 Rue de la Maraicherie

MLLE. VICTOIRE, cook to the Dean of the Faculty of Balançon, Mademoiselle Gertrude, servant of the Warden of the said Faculty, and Mademoiselle Anastasie, housekeeper to the Abbé Beaufleury, Curé of St. Eulalie—such was the respectable coterie which happened to meet at the counter of Madame Labotte, fruiterer, 26 Rue de la Maraicherie, one Thursday morning.

These ladies, with their shopping baskets on their left arms and little white goffered caps posed coquettishly on their heads so that the ribbons hung down their backs, were listening with interest

to Mademoiselle Anastasie who was telling them how the Abbé Beaufleury had that very morning exorcised a poor woman possessed of five devils.

Suddenly Mademoiselle Honorine, Doctor Heraclius' housekeeper, rushed in like a whirlwind and sank into a chair, overcome by emotion. Then, when she saw that they were all thoroughly intrigued, she burst out:

"No, it's *too* much! Whatever happens I'll not stop any longer in that house." And then she hid her face in her hands and began to sob. A moment or two later, when she was a little calmer, she went on:

"After all, it's not the poor man's fault if he's mad."

"Who?" asked Mademoiselle Labotte.

"Why, her master, Doctor Heraclius," put in Mademoiselle Victoire. "So what the Dean said is true then—your master has gone queer in the head?"

"I should just think so!" exclaimed Mademoiselle Anastasie. "The Curé, talking to the Abbé Rosencroix the other day, declared that Doctor Heraclius was a proper reprobate, that he worshiped animals, after the style of a man called Pythagoras who, so it seems, was a heretic as wicked as Luther."

"What's happened now?" interrupted Mademoiselle Gertrude. "What's the matter with you?"

"Well, just think," said Honorine, drying her eyes on the corner of her apron, "for nearly six months now my poor master has been mad about animals. He believes that he has been created and placed in the world to serve them, he speaks to them as though they were sensible human beings, and one would almost believe that he gets an answer from inside them somehow. Anyway, yesterday evening I saw that mice were eating my provisions and I put a mouse-trap in the

larder. This morning I found I'd caught one. I called the cat and was just going to give the little beast to him when the master rushed in like a madman. He snatched the trap out of my hands and let the brute loose in the middle of my pickles. And when I got angry he turned on me and treated me as one wouldn't treat a rag and bone man."

There was a tense silence for some minutes and then Mademoiselle Honorine added:

"After all, I don't blame the poor man. He's mad."

Two hours later the story of the Doctor and the mouse had gone the round of every kitchen in Balançon. At lunchtime all the bourgeois were telling it to each other, and at eight o'clock M. le Premier repeated it, as he drank his coffee, to six magistrates who had been dining with him. These gentlemen, seated in solemn attitudes, listened

dreamily, without smiling, but with grave nods of their heads. At eleven o'clock the Prefect, who was giving a party, was worried with it in front of six minor officials and when he asked the Warden for his opinion, the latter, who was parading his white tie and his propensity for mischief before group after group of guests, answered thus:

"After all, what does this prove, Prefect? Why, that if La Fontaine were still living, he could write a new fable entitled 'The Philosopher's Mouse,' which would end up—'The more foolish of the two is not the one one thinks.'"

XXVII. How Doctor Heraclius did not Agree with the Dauphin, Who, having Saved a Monkey from Drowning, Threw it Back Again and Went Off to Find a Man to Save Instead

WHEN Heraclius went out the following morning he noticed that every one looked at him with curiosity as he passed and that people turned to glance twice at him. At first all this attention astonished him; he wondered what the reason of it was and thought that perhaps his doctrine had spread without his knowledge and that he was on the point of being appreciated by his fellow citizens. He was suddenly filled with a great tenderness towards these people, whom he already

saw as his enthusiastic disciples, and he began to acknowledge them by smiling right and left, like a prince among his people. The whisperings that followed him seemed to him murmurs of praise and he beamed cheerfully at the thought of the imminent consternation of the Warden and the Dean.

In this way he reached the *Quai de la Brille*. A few yards away a group of excited children, roaring with laughter, were throwing stones into the water, while some sailors, lounging in the sun and smoking, seemed interested in the game. Heraclius approached and then suddenly drew back as though he had received a heavy blow in the chest. Ten yards from the bank, sinking and coming up again by turns, a kitten was drowning. The poor little animal, was making desperate efforts to regain the bank, but each time she showed her head above water a stone thrown by one of the

urchins, who were enjoying her agony, made her go under again. The wicked rascals vied with each other and urged each other on, and when a well-aimed shot hit the wretched animal there were shouts of laughter and cries of joy. Suddenly a glancing pebble hit the kitten on the forehead and a trickle of blood appeared on her white fur. The torturers burst into shouts of joy and applause, which however, turned suddenly into a terrible panic. Livid, trembling with rage, upsetting all before him and striking out with his fists and feet, the Doctor hurled himself among the brats like a wolf into a flock of sheep. Their terror was so great and their flight so rapid that one of them, distracted with fear, threw himself into the river and disappeared. Heraclius quickly unbuttoned his coat, kicked off his shoes and jumped into the water. He was seen to swim vigorously for a moment or two, catch hold of the

kitten just as she was sinking, and regain the bank. Then he seated himself on a stone and having dried and kissed the little being whom he had snatched from death, he folded her lovingly in his arms like a baby and without troubling about the child, whom two sailors were bringing to land, and quite indifferent to the din going on behind him, he strode off towards his house, forgetting his shoes and coat which he had left behind him on the bank.

XXVIII. "This Story will Show You that, if You Want to Save a Fellow Creature from Blows and Believe that it is Better to Rescue a Cat than a Man, You will Excite the Anger of your Neigbors. All Roads Lead to Rome—but Metempsychosis Leads to the Lunatic Asylum."—Balançon Star

TWO hours later a huge crowd of shouting people was jostling and pushing in front of the Doctor's windows. Soon a shower of stones shattered the panes and the crowd was about to rush the doors when the police appeared at the end of the street. Things gradually became calmer and the mob scattered, but two policemen remained outside the Doctor's house until the fol-

lowing day. The Doctor was in a state of extreme agitation the whole evening. He told himself that the letting loose of the crowd on him was due to the underhand threats of the priests and to the explosion of hatred which always heralds the advent of a new religion among the followers of an old one. He raised himself to the status of a martyr and felt ready to confess his faith before his executioners. He brought into his study as many animals as the room would hold and dawn found him sleeping between his dog, a goat and a sheep, and clasping to his heart the kitten which he had saved.

A loud knock at his door awakened him, and Honorine showed in a solemn-looking individual, followed by two detectives, with the Medical Officer of Health in the background. The solemn individual made himself known as the Chief of Police, and courteously invited

Heraclius to follow him. Very much upset, the latter did so and was made to get into a carriage which was waiting at the door. Then, sitting next the Chief of Police, with the Medical Officer and one detective facing him and the other detective on the box beside the driver, Heraclius soon noticed that they were driving down the Rue des Juifs, through the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville and the Boulevard de la Pucelle. At last they stopped outside a grim-looking building on the door of which was written "Home for the Mentally Deficient." The Doctor suddenly realized the terrible trap into which he had fallen and the devilish cunning of his enemies. Summoning all his strength he tried to hurl himself into the road, but two strong hands forced him back into his seat. Then began a terrible struggle between them and the three men in charge of him: he wriggled and twisted and kicked and bit, howling with rage all

the time. But at last he was overpowered, tied up, and carried into the fatal building. Its door clanged behind him with an ominous sound.

He was taken into a narrow cell of a peculiar kind. The fireplace and the windows were barred, the bed and the solitary chair were attached to the floor by iron chains, and there was no piece of furniture which could be picked up and handled by the occupant. As it turned out, events proved that these precautions were by no means unnecessary, for as soon as the Doctor found himself in these new surroundings he gave way to the rage that was almost choking him. He tried to smash the furniture, to tear out the bars and to break the windows. Unsuccessful in this, he rolled on the ground and gave vent to such fearful cries that two men in blouses and uniform caps hurried in, followed by a huge bald-headed man dressed in black. At a sign,

the two men seized Heraclius and in an instant had him in a straight waistcoat; then they glanced towards the man in black. The latter looked pensively at Heraclius for a moment and then said:

"Take him to the douche room."

Heraclius was carried into a large cold room in the middle of which was an empty bath. Still yelling, he was undressed and placed in this bath. Before he knew what was happening, he was almost suffocated by as horrible an avalanche of cold water as ever descended on the back of any human being—even in the Arctic regions. Heraclius was completely silenced. The man in black, who had been watching him all the time, felt his pulse and said:

"Give him another one."

A second shower fell from the ceiling and the Doctor collapsed, choking, to the bottom of his ice-cold bath. He was then picked up, wrapped in warm blan-

kets and put to bed in his cell, where he slept soundly for thirty-five hours.

He woke the following morning with a steady pulse and a clear head. For some minutes he considered the situation and then he began to read his manuscript, which he had taken care not to leave behind. The man in black presently appeared, and when lunch was brought they had it together. The Doctor, who had not forgotten his cold bath, was very quiet and polite and made no reference to the subject which had resulted in such a misadventure; but conversed for a long time very entertainingly, in an endeavor to prove to his host that he was as sane as the seven sages of Greece.

The man in black, as he was leaving, gave the Doctor permission to take a stroll in the garden, which was a large one planted with trees. About fifty persons were taking exercise there: some were laughing, shouting and haranguing each

other, others were grave and melancholy.

One of the first persons the Doctor noticed was a tall man with a long beard and white hair, who was walking by himself with his eyes on the ground. Without knowing why, the Doctor felt interested in the fate of this unknown man. Presently, the latter raised his eyes and stared fixedly at Heraclius. They advanced, greeted each other ceremoniously and began to talk. The Doctor learned that his companion was called Dagobert Félorme, and that he was Professor of modern languages at the college of Balançon. Heraclius did not notice anything wrong with the man's mind and was wondering what could have brought him to such a place when suddenly the other stopped, grasped Heraclius' hand firmly and said:

"Do you believe in metempsychosis?"

The Doctor swayed and began to stammer an answer. Their eyes met and for

some time the two of them stood staring at each other. At last Heraclius was overcome by his emotion, and tears welled up in his eyes. He opened his arms and they embraced. Then, confiding in each other, they soon realized that they were inspired by the same faith and impregnated with the same doctrine. There was no point on which they differed. But as this astonishing similarity of thought began to be established, a feeling of peculiar uneasiness came over the Doctor, for it seemed to him that the more the stranger grew in his estimation, the more he himself lost in his own. He was seized with jealousy.

Suddenly his companion exclaimed:

"Metempsychosis—It is I. It was I who discovered the evolution of souls and who welded the destinies of men. I was Pythagoras."

The Doctor stopped dead, pale as a sheet.

"Excuse me," he said, "I am Pythagoras."

Once again they stared at each other, and then the stranger spoke again.

"I have been philosopher, architect, soldier, laborer, monk, mathematician, doctor, poet, sailor, in turn," he said.

"So have I," said Heraclius.

"I've written my life's history in Latin, Greek, German, Italian, Spanish and French," cried the other.

"So have I," answered Heraclius.

Both stopped speaking and looked daggers at each other.

"In the year 184," shouted the other, "I lived in Rome as a philosopher."

Then the Doctor, shaking like a leaf in a gust of wind, drew his precious document from his pocket and brandished it like a pistol under his adversary's nose. The latter sprang back.

"My manuscript," he cried, and put out his hand to seize it.

"It's mine," roared Heraclius, and with surprising rapidity he raised the object of contention above his head, changed it to his other hand behind his back and did every sort of extraordinary trick with it to keep it out of his frenzied rival's reach. The latter clenched his teeth, stamped his feet and roared: "Thief! Thief! Thief!"

Then with a quick and cunning movement he managed to get hold of a corner of the paper which Heraclius was trying to keep from him. For some seconds they pulled hard and angrily in opposite directions, and then, as neither would give way, the manuscript, which might be described as forming a living hyphen between them, acted as wisely as the late King Solomon might have done, by separating into two equal parts, with the result that the two warriors sat down with unexpected suddenness ten paces apart, each clutching his half of the spoils of victory between shriveled fingers.

They did not move but sat staring at each other like rival forces which, having gauged each other's strength, are loth to come to grips again. Dagobert Félorme began first:

"The proof that I am the author of this manuscript," he said, "is that I knew of it before you."

Heraclius did not answer, and the other went on:

"The proof that I am the author of this manuscript is that I can repeat it from end to end in the seven languages in which it is written."

Heraclius did not answer—but he was thinking hard. A revolution was taking place in him. There was no possible doubt—victory lay with his rival. But this author—whom at one time he had invoked with all his prayers, raised his indignation now as a false god. For, as a dethroned god himself, he revolted against divinity. Before he had come to

regard himself as the author of the manuscript, he had longed to meet whoever had written it, but from the day when he began to say: "It was I who wrote this. Metempsychosis is I myself," he could no longer sanction any one usurping his place. Like a man who would burn his house down rather than see it occupied by some one else, he was prepared to burn both temple and god, to burn metempsychosis itself even, as soon as a stranger ascended the altar to which he had exalted himself.

And so, after a long silence, he said slowly and solemnly:

"You are mad."

At this, his enemy dashed at him like a lunatic, and a fresh struggle more terrible than the first would have begun had not the guardians rushed up and reimprisoned these religious fanatics in their respective cells.

For a month the Doctor did not leave his room. He passed his days alone with his head between his hands in profound meditation. From time to time the Dean and the Warden came to see him and by means of clever comparisons and delicate allusions gently assisted the change that was taking place in his mind. Thus they told him how a certain Dagobert Félorme, professor of languages at the college of Balançon, had gone mad while writing a philosophical treatise on the doctrine of Pythagoras, Aristotle and Plato—a treatise which he had imagined he had begun under the Emperor Commodus.

At last, one beautiful sunny morning, the Doctor came to himself. Once more he was the Heraclius of the good old days. Warmly clasping the hands of his two friends he told them that he had renounced forever metempsychosis, expia-

tions in animal form and transmigrations. Tapping himself on the breast he admitted that he had been entirely mistaken. A week later the doors of the asylum were opened to him.

XXIX. How One sometimes Exchanges Scylla for Charybdis

HERACLIUS paused for a moment as he was leaving the fatal building and took a deep breath of the fine air of liberty. Then, with his brisk step of former days, he set off towards his house. After he had been walking for about five minutes a street urchin saw him and at once gave a long whistle, which was promptly answered from a neighboring street. A second urchin appeared and the first one pointed to Heraclius and shouted with all his might:

"Here's the animal man come out of the madhouse."

Keeping close behind the Doctor they both began to imitate with remarkable

skill the noise made by every sort of animal. Presently a dozen or more joined the first comers and formed an escort to the ex-metempsychosist, as noisy as it was objectionable. One of them walked ten yards in front of the Doctor carrying a broom-handle on which he had fixed a rabbit skin like a flag. Three others followed imitating the roll of a drum, and then came the frightened Doctor; with his frock-coat tightly buttoned and his hat over his eyes he looked like a general in the middle of his troops.

After him came a whole horde of ragamuffins, running, turning cartwheels, yelling, bellowing, barking, miawing, neighing, mooing, crowing and inventing a thousand other amusing things, to the great enjoyment of the townsfolk standing at their doors. The bewildered Heraclius quickened his pace still more. Suddenly, a prowling dog got between his legs and in a paroxysm of rage the

Doctor let fly such a terrific kick at the poor beast (which he would formerly have welcomed) that the latter ran off howling with pain. Such a tremendous din burst out all round that Heraclius lost his head and began to run as hard as he could, still followed by his infernal procession.

The gang passed like a whirlwind through the principal streets and came to a stop outside the Doctor's house. Seeing the door ajar, he darted through it and closed it behind him. Then, still running, he went on up to his study. There he was greeted by the monkey, who put out his tongue at him as a sign of welcome. It was a sight that made him recoil as though a ghost had appeared. For was not his monkey the living souvenir of all his misfortunes, the cause of his madness and of all the humiliations and outrages to which he had been subjected? He seized an oak stool which was handy

and with one blow split the miserable creature's skull. The latter dropped like a stone at the feet of his murderer. Then, soothed at having carried out this execution, Heraclius sank into an armchair and unbuttoned his coat.

When Honorine appeared she almost fainted with joy at the sight of her master. In her delight she sprang towards him and kissed him on both cheeks, forgetting the distance that, in the eyes of the world, is supposed to exist between the master and his servant, in which, so it was said, the Doctor had already shown her the way. Meanwhile, the mob had not dispersed but was still creating such a noise outside the front door that Heraclius, much put out, went down into his garden. A horrible sight met his eyes.

Honcrine who, although she deplored her master's madness, had wanted to give him a pleasant surprise for his homecoming, had watched like a mother over

the lives of all the animals in the place, so that, owing to their natural fecundity, the garden had the appearance of the interior of Noah's Ark when the flood subsided. For the garden was a confused mass of animals, a veritable swarm, beneath which trees, shrubs, grass and earth had entirely disappeared. The branches were bent under the weight of whole regiments of birds, while underneath them dogs, cats, goats, sheep, chickens, ducks and turkeys, rolled in the dust. The air resounded with a clamor of sound as loud as that made by the brats on the other side of the house.

Heraclius could restrain himself no longer. He snatched up a spade which had been left against the wall and like the two famous warriors whose exploits are described by Homer, sprang this way and that, hitting out right and left. Foaming at the mouth and with rage in his heart, he began a terrible massacre of all his harm-

less friends. Terrified chickens hid under the walls and cats climbed up the trees. But he gave no quarter and the confusion was indescribable. When the ground was scattered with corpses he collapsed from sheer exhaustion and slept on the field of carnage like a victorious general.

Next day his excitement had vanished and he thought of taking a walk around the town. But as soon as he left his doorstep the street urchins, who had been lying in wait for him, started pursuing him once more, shouting: "Oh! Oh! the animal man! the friend of the beasts!" And they began to make the same noises as on the previous day, with plenty of added variations.

The Doctor went hurriedly back: anger choked him and, since he could not vent it on men, he swore a deadly hatred and vowed war to the death against all animals. From then onwards he had only one desire, one aim, one ceaseless

preoccupation—to kill animals. He lay in wait for them from morning till night; he stretched nets in his garden to catch birds and snares in the gutters to strangle the neighbors' cats. Passing dogs were attracted by appetizing bits of meat placed in his half-open door—which always shut quickly when a foolish victim succumbed to temptation. Complaints were soon heard on all sides. The Chief of Police came several times in person to order him to stop his relentless warfare. He was inundated with summonses, but nothing could arrest his vengeance. At last there was general indignation. A second riot broke out in the town and he would without doubt have been lynched by the crowd but for the intervention of armed force. All the doctors in Balançon were summoned to the prefecture and declared unanimously that Dr. Heraclius Gloss was mad. For the second time he passed through the town between two police-

men, and saw the heavy door of the building on which was written: "Home for the Mentally Deficient," close behind him.

XXX. How the Proverb—"The Madder One is, the More One Laughs,"—is not Always Quite True

THE next day he went into the courtyard of the establishment and the first person he set eyes on was the author of the manuscript on metempsychosis. The two enemies looked each other up and down and then drew close. A circle was formed round them and Dagobert cried:

"Here's the man who wanted to steal my life's work, who wanted to filch from me the glory of my discovery."

A murmur passed through the crowd, and Heraclius answered:

"Here's the man who pretends that animals are men and men animals."

Then they both began to talk at once and became more and more excited. As on the first occasion, they soon came to blows, but the onlookers separated them.

From that day onwards each of them tried with amazing perseverence and tenacity to recruit followers and soon the whole community was divided into two rival parties. These parties were so enthusiastic, so violent and so irreconcilable that if a metempsychosist happened to run across an adversary a terrible battle ensued. To avoid these sanguinary encounters the Governor was obliged to arrange separate hours of exercise for each faction: for there had never been such relentless hatred between two rival sects since the quarrel between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. Thanks to this prudent arrangement, however, the chiefs of the hostile clans lived happily—beloved and listened to by their disciples, obeyed and venerated.

Sometimes during the night the sound of a dog howling and barking outside the walls would make Heraclius and Dagobert tremble in their beds. It was the faithful Pythagoras who, having escaped his master's vengeance by a miracle, had tracked him to the threshold of his new home and was trying to gain an entrance to the house into which only men had the right to pass.

THE END

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